Publick Charity.

A

SERMON

Preached before the

RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE

Lord Mayor,

ALDERMEN and Governours of the Several Hospitals of the City.

At St. *Bridget*'s-Church,

On *Wednesday* in *Easter-week*, 1697.

By *THO. JEKYLL*, D. D. and Preacher at the *New-Church* in *Westminster*.

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Clarke, Mayor.

Martis viii. die Aprilis, 1697. Annoq; R. R. Will. Tertii. Angliæ, &c. Nono.

THis *Court doth desire Dr.* Jekyll *to Print his Sermon Preached at the Parish-Church of St.* Bridget, *on* Wednesday *in* Easter-Week *last, before the Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Governours of the several* Hospitals *of this City.*

Goodfellow.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

Sir Edward Clarke,

Lord Mayor of the City of *LONDON*,

AND

To the Court of ALDERMEN.

My Lord,

THough *I shall be always ready to yeild all due Deference to your Lordship's Authority, and to the Ancient Government of the City of* London, *where I drew in my first Breath, and to which I have many other obligations besides, yet I shall freely own that the Character which your Lordship hath so deservedly obtain'd amongst all Good Men, hath done more then any thing else, to the engaging me to a chearful Compliance with your Lordships first Order, which appointed me to this undertaking, and to that which I have since receiv'd for the Publication of what I had done therein; for it hath been always a settl'd Principle of my mind,*

and

and which I hope I ſhall now never depart from, to value Men more by their Goodneſs then their Greatneſs, by their Virtues then their exalted Stations; eſpecially, ſince I am ſo happy as to have all mankind think the ſame (whatever they may ſay or do to the Contrary, to ſerve a turn) as well as the Divine Oracles (which always judg aright and ſpeak the Truth) to aſſert it too; for the Righteous, in whatever outward Circumſtances he is plac'd, is, and always will be more excellent then his Neighbour in this World, and Infinitely more Happy in another, which that your Lordſhip may for ever both deſerve and find, ſhall be the hearty Prayer of,

My Lord,

Your Lordſhips moſt Faithful

and Obedient Servant,

THO. JEKYLL.

Publick Charity.

A

SERMON

Preached before the

Lord Mayor,

AND

The Court of ALDERMEN, &c.

MATH. V. 16.

Let your Light so shine before Men, that they may see your good Works, and glorifie your Father which is in Heaven.

THE words are a part of our Saviour's Excellent Sermon in the Mount, and do abundantly Justifie the Solemnity of this Day, in which a **Third Report** is to be made of some of the most Eminent Charities which the Christian World can produce, and which the *Text* allows us to make our Boast of; For tho our Saviour in this very

Ch. 6. 2, 3. Sermon, forbids the *Sounding of a Trumpet before our Alms; and letting even the Left hand know what the Right hand does*, to avoid all manner of Oſtentation and Vain Glory (as all that which we endeavour to aſſume to our ſelves, is); yet when God may be Glorified (which is the main thing we are *always* to aim at in all that we do) and others may be excited to joyn with us therein, both in word and deed; we are not only allowed, but required to be as Publick as we can; eſpecially when our very Faith, from the Time of the Reformation, hath been Reproach'd by our Adverſaries of the Church of *Rome*, not only as dead and fruitleſs, but as a declar'd Enemy and Obſtacle to all Good Works; We may then ſure be allow'd to anſwer *ſuch Fools according to their Folly*, as *Solomon* ſpeaks, *Prov.* 26. 5. and with St. *Paul, to boaſt our ſelves a little, when they thus compel us to it*; and when in the midſt of all our Glorying in the ſight of men, we look upon our ſelves, and all that we do herein, as nothing in the ſight of God; then indeed we may, nay, then we muſt do as the Text requires, *Make the Light of our Good Works ſo to ſhine before men, that they may ſee them, and glorifie our Father which is in Heaven.*

Nor is this Duty incumbent only upon thoſe that are of Greateſt Abilities for it, either by their Wealth or Stations, or are advanc'd to any Eminent Dignities or Employments either in Church or State, but ſuch as particularly concerns all, and extends it ſelf to every Individual Believer, tho of the meanneſt Rank and Condition: For tho theſe words, *Ye are the Salt of the Earth*, mentioned in the 13th verſe; and *Ye are the Light of the World*, mentioned in the 14th, do very appoſitely agree to thoſe that were promoted to the Apoſtolical Dignity and Office, yet ſince the Diſciples, tho call'd before, yet were

were not then actually appointed thereto (for that we read, *Mat.* 10. was done afterwards) : And since all the other parts of this Excellent Sermon, do equally agree to all sorts of Christians whatsoever, we may well conclude, that they are all of them particularly concerned in this Precept also. For Christians, as such, let their Ranks and Stations be what they will, are *the Salt of the Earth*, are *the Light of the World*; and therefore are certainly obliged *so to shine in all good works, before men, that they may be seen, and their Heavenly Father be the more glorified thereby*, especially when *they are like a City on an* v. 14. *Hill, that cannot be hid.* And therefore since they must and will be seen, it is necessary that they should be seen to the best advantage, to the Glory of God, and the good of Men. And indeed this our Saviour seems particularly to intend in these words; and therefore they are usher'd in with such a Comparison as sufficiently shews what God design'd and aim'd at in the several Capacities that he has set us in, that he never bestows any Gift upon us only for our selves, or for our own sakes, but for the good of others, and to enable us the better to do good therewith; therefore, says he, just before the Text, *Men do not light a Candle, and put it under a Bushel, but on* v. 15. *a Candlestick, and it giveth Light to all that are in the house.* Therefore he adds in the *Text* it self, *Let your Light so shine*, as other Lights use to do, that Men may receive benefit by them, and be the better for them, and may give Glory to him who is the *Father of Lights, from whom eve-* Jam. 1. 17. *ry good and perfect gift comes*; and by whom we are enabled to do any thing that is or may be called a good work; or, to speak more agreeable to the Phrase of the Text, who has enlightned us, or made us to shine, and commanded, as well as enabled us to give Light to others. *Let your light*, &c.

In which words we have Four Things to consider:

1. Here is a Duty enjoyn'd, which is to make our Light shine; *Let your Light shine*, &c. Now by *Light* we are to understand *the Doctrine of Christianity*, as it hath been reveal'd unto men by our blessed Saviour, who, amongst other Titles given him in Scripture, is sometime styl'd the *Sun of Righteousness*, *the Light of the World*, *and the Day-spring from on high*: And therefore those that are called by his Name, are said to be *enlightned* by him, and *to be the children of Light*; upon which account Baptism was anciently called φώτισμός; the *Illumination* perhaps from those Expressions of the Apostle to the *Hebrews*; in which he calls the receiving of the Christian Faith, a being *enlightned*. And indeed the whole Gospel may not be unfitly comprehended under this Title, because immediately upon the appearing of this blessed Light, all the shadows of the *Mosaic* Dispensation fled away, and the darkness of the *Gentiles* was happily overcome by the clear day which the Gospel made upon its Glorious Discovery of what was so necessary to eternal salvation.

Mal. 4. 2. John 8. 12. Luk. 1. 78. Eph. 5. 8. Heb. 6. 4.

2. We are here told what we are to shine in, *i.e.* in good works; *Let your Light so shine before men, that they may see your good works*. By *good works* we are to understand, in general, all those *works* that have any true Worth or Excellency in them, and which are now vastly improv'd under the Gospel, into greater degrees of Perfection than what they ever had before, either under *Moses*'s Law, or any other dispensation whatsoever; for we are now so plainly taught the Nature of things, that we are well able to judg how to value them.

The Worship of God which before shewed him only to be the Sovereign Lord of all, now discovers what his Nature is, and demonstrates it to be purely spiritual; which none of the *Jewish Sacrifices*, in themselves consider'd, ever did

did or could do, there being no manner of Reſemblance between ſuch a Nature and the *Blood and Fleſh of Bulls and Goats, and the Aſhes of an Heifer*. The Love of our Neighbour, and the good Offices that depend upon it, are not now confin'd to One Nation only, but extend themſelves to all men that need them without exception. In a word, the Duties that more immediately concern our ſelves, are now under the Goſpel made plain and eaſie, which under *Moſes*'s Law were dark and obſcure, and required a great deal of Pains and Skill to underſtand them, as well as a great deal of Compliance to reconcile the minds of men to them. But now every Duty that is requir'd of us, ſhews the Excellency of its own Nature, and becomes not only a Reaſonable, but a Glorious and a Pleaſant Service too, having nothing in it but what is truly Good, and very Lovely and Deſirable. Heb. 9. 13.

3. Here is the manner in which we are to ſhine, which is to be as publickly as we can, that we may be ſure to be ſeen; for it is not enough for us to call our ſelves *Chriſtians*, to believe with the Heart alone, to be, or to do good in private and in ſecret only, or to content our ſelves with any common meaſures or degrees of Goodneſs, which others that do not at all belong to Chriſt may arrive at; but we muſt take care to excell therein, and to be Eminent Examples of Piety, Virtue and Charity to all with whom we do converſe.

4. Here is the End that we are to Propound and Aim at in our ſhining, which is, *That our Heavenly Father may be Glorified*. For thoſe things that are good in themſelves may be, and often are done to bad Purpoſes, the Glory of God is therefore here enjoyn'd as the End of all, that we do therein. For this Reaſon therefore and to this purpoſe, *Let your Light*, &c.

And

And now from these Words thus explain'd give me leave to Comprehend the meaning of them, and the Duty that is contain'd in them, in this single Proposition.

Those that call themselves Christs, are to be publick and eminent Examples unto others in all good works, In the handling of which I shall proceed in this Method.

1. I shall shew how fit and requisite this is---2. I shall consider it with Respect to the different Capacities and Abilities of Christians. 3. I shall shew how those Precepts, that forbid all Publick discoveries of our Good Works, can be reconcil'd to this, that require us to make them as Conspicuous as we can.---4. I shall make Application with respect to the present occasion.

1. I shall shew how fit and requisite it is, for those that call themselves Christians to be Publick and Eminent Examples unto others, in all Good Works. And this I shall do,

1. With respect to the more perfect State of the Gospel, under which we are, which does certainly require it. For now the Moral Law is entirely rescued from all the false Glosses of the Pharisees, and those Laws that are truly and properly Evangelical, are not only most pure and perfect in themselves, but do continually shew forth
2 Tim. 1. 10. the greatest Love to men. *Life and Immortality are thereby brought to Light*, Eternal Rewards are therein promis'd, to a sincere, tho' imperfect Obedience, and those aids are continually lent us from above, as shall make us always highly acceptable unto God. Now to what purpose can we imagine all this to be, if our Lives and Manners are not Answerable thereto? we cannot think a *Jew* Excus-
Gal. 4. 9. able under his *Weak and Beggery Elements*, if his Practise be not Answerable to his Profession; Nor can we tell how to think well of a Heathen, tho his Ignorance has almost Extinguish'd the very Light of Nature, if his

Life

Life and Manners are Vicious and Immoral, what then shall we say to a Christians, who has been *Once Enlightned, and has Tasted of the Heavenly gift, and has been made partakers of the Holy Ghost*, If he shall Live, I will not say wickedly but less virtuously, and shew little or nothing of that *Light*, of which he either is, or ought to be a *Child*: He certainly, must needs be very unworthy of that Glorious Character which he bears, whose Temper and Manners are different therefrom, and directly contrary thereto. Heb. 6. 4.

2. This must be requisite, because by this means alone we come to be known to be Christians. That Faith by which we receive and embrace the Gospel, is an Inward Principle Seated in the Heart visible only to the All-seeing Eye of God, and by no means to be discern'd by Men, and therefore there are some publick and open Confessions of it to be made, to Entitle us to that Salvation which it offers us, and Encourages us to hope for; And so the Apostle tells us, *Rom.* 10. 10. That we must outwardly profess, as well as Inwardly believe the Resurrection of our Lord from the Dead, if we expect to be sav'd by him; for tho *With the Heart Man believeth unto Righteousness, yet it is with the Mouth, that Confession is made unto Salvation*; That it is not enough for us, to be throughly perswaded of this our selves, unless we openly profess it to the World; Nor is this all that is to be done by us; for tho this might have been very well, and fit for the Infancy of the Church, and the first Ages of Christianity, in which it was much easier to Live like Christians, then to make Profession of being so, for Virtue and Goodness, Righteousness and Mercy, were never publickly Condemn'd by any Society, or Goverment in the World, but the Name of Christ, was *every where spoken* [illegible] 28. 22. *against*. But now God be Praised, our Christian Profession

is

is as easie and safe, as it is publick and open; And therefore it is not for us to Rest in a bare Profession of the Christian Faith, for we must make that Profession as Illustrious as we can, and adorn it with as many Good Works as we are able; for otherwise we can never be said to *shine as Lights in the world*: we shall at best be but as a *Candle under a Bushel*; which is so far from shining to any purpose, that none can tell whether it shines at all; and indeed since no body can see its Light, it is all one as if it gave none.

3. The great Example of our Lord, to which we are oblig'd to conform our selves, requires it of us. For we are certainly to make him our Pattern in all imitable things, being expressly commanded to follow his *steps* therein: yea it is the great thing that we are called unto in the Gospel. Now how gloriously did his Zeal for God manifest it self! how conspicuous did his Love to Mankind appear! In the one he is so transported that he abandon'd all care of his own safety, in attempting a Reformation of those *scanda-*
John 2. 14, 15. *lous Profanations of the houses of God*, that were so *notorious and offensive*, at the hazard of *his Life*, from those *Money changers*, whose *Tables he overthrew*, and whom he scourged out of the *Temple*: and in the other he suffers himself to be abandon'd and forsaken by all the World, and for a time even by his *Father* too, and to have *his Life* torn from him with utmost Violence, that if possible none might perish. He was so intirely given up to the doing of *his Father's will*,
John 4. 34. that he made more account of it than of *his necessary Food*; yea *it was his meat and his drink to do it*; nay, when he begged so heartily to be excus'd (*if possible*) from drinking that *bitter Cup that was put into his hand*, with what a profound submission to the *Will of his Father*, did he regulate and qualifie the *earnestness of his own desire therein*, saying at the
Mat. 26. 39. same time, *Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done*, especially

clally, when it was so necessary, that it should be so for Gods Glory and the Good of Men; for these always went together to instruct us what to do in this matter, and in what manner we are to perform all that we take in hand, for we find him always seeking after occasions of doing Good, both to the Bodies and to the Souls of Men, and not staying till they offer'd themselves to him; so that we may say with St. *Peter*, *He went up and down* Acts 10. 28. *doing Good*, and spent all his Time in such Exercises; Restoring the Sick, Cleansing the Lepers, curing the Lame, opening the Ears of the Deaf, and the Eyes of the Blind, and healing all manner of Sickness, and all manner of Diseases amongst the People; and what's more then all this, and for the sake of which all the rest was done, took special care, that the *Poor* should partake of the Rich Grace of God, and *have the Gospel Preached unto them*. Mat. 11. 5.

And who now can behold such Exemplary Piety, such fervent Zeal towards God, such Ardent and Unparalell'd Love to Man, that shin'd so Gloriously in all that the Blessed Jesus did, and not desire and endeavour to imitate it; yea, even to be transform'd into it. They therefore are mightily mistaken that say, or think, that our Saviour came into the World, only as a Pattern and Example, to do it of all that was Good; nor are they less mistaken that affirm, or imagine that he came into it, only to make Satisfaction for our Sins by his Death, and that we are not as much concern'd in the Example of his Life, because there are some things in it that are above our imitation. For tho that may be true, yet even in those very things there is something that we are oblig'd to Copy out, and to resemble him in; we cannot indeed work Miracles as he did, but we may imitate the Charity and Goodness that appear'd in all his Miracles, and do even somewhat towards the things themselves, as far as our Poor Powers

and Capacities will allow us to do. We cannot make 5 Loaves afford a Plentiful Meal to 5000 at once, but we may find enough both to Feed and Cloath, to cure and to inſtruct a great many more, in the Succeſſions of Time, by founding and endowing of Hoſpitals, and Schools; Nay, we may be daily doing ſomething in it, according to our ſeveral Abilities, by the Relief that we continually give out, to thoſe that are in want. We cannot by a word ſpeaking Heal the Sick, but we may viſit them, and do a great many things towards their recovery, either by our ſelves, or others. We cannot wholly deliver the diſtreſſed from all their Afflictions, but we may make them a great deal Lighter, and abate both the Number and Weight of them. Tho' we cannot do ſo much as we would, yet certainly, there are ſome things that we can do for them; and what we can do, ſure no man will deny that he ought. Thus far therefore we may and muſt imitate our Lord, and ſure there are ſuch Charms in his Example, as muſt needs make us all ſtrive to do it.

4. That future State of Happineſs and Glory, which we all hope to arrive at, muſt oblige us to this Duty. For we are taught to believe and expect not only a State of Happineſs for our Souls, but alſo a joyful Reſurrection for our Bodies. *When all Tears ſhall be wip'd away from all Eyes,* Rev. 21. 4. *and there ſhall be no more Sickneſs, no more Pain, nor no more Death.* And tho this be all owing to the Grace and Favour of God, and is the Effect of his Mercy and Goodneſs, yet we may eaſily ſee the Reaſon of this his intended kindneſs to us, becauſe our Bodies are not only ſerviceable to our Souls, but have their particular ſhare in thoſe good Offices which Compoſe the Chriſtian Life, which they put them upon and imploy them in. And indeed for their ſakes this Precept ſeems to be given, becauſe they are immediately concern'd in thoſe things that are obvious to

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the Eye of the World, and which our Souls can by no other ways and means make any manner of shew of; as particularly in all those Duties that we are call'd to, in the Publick Worship and Service of God, and in all the Common Offices of Humanity, Mercy and Goodness, which we Perform to Men. For if we consider those Duties of Gods Worship and Service that are private and secret, they are indeed best perform'd when our Bodies have the least share in them; as when we are, for instance, so wrapt up in the Contemplation of the Divine Perfections, that our Souls can give no more Account of their Relation to our Bodies then St. *Paul* could, when he was *caught up into the third Heaven*. So also when we are seriously musing and meditating about the vanity and uncertainty of these Earthly things, and even about the frailty of our own Bodies in this Present Life, our Souls are in a manner call'd off therefrom, and Soare a great deal higher, having nothing to do with our Bodies therein, but only from what their own Experience has dictated to them to this Purpose; yea, so far is the Body from being any further Serviceable to the Soul even in these things, that it often proves a great hindrance to it by its Sleepiness and Sloth, and the many distractions that it occasions. In respect of these Offices, indeed there is no Reason why the Body should share with the Soul in its Happiness and Joy. But now there are other Duties in which the Body does, and must Act in Conjunction with the Soul, as when in the Publick Worship of God, *We present our Bodies, as the Apostle speaks, a Holy Living Sacrifice acceptable to God*; And therein bow and kneel before him, lift up our Hands and our Eyes, and declare by our words the Inward desires of our Souls: so also in those Duties that concern our Neighbour, it is but little that the Soul can do of its self, for they are only the Members of the body that Act therein. Nay, those very

2 Cor. 3. 2.

Rom. 12. 1.

ry Members, not only serve and assist the Soul, but even excite and quicken it, to greater Degrees of Tenderness and Compassion, for those that are in misery; nay, we cannot forbear Sympathizing with them therein, and being in a manner affected our selves, just as they are. Their Tears do often draw Tears from us, their Groans will make us also Sigh, and be in Pain for them; and the sight of their miseries will Pierce us also, and touch us to the quick, yea, and by this means afford some relief to them, whilst they see us thus Pity, and Bear a part with them in their Distress. Since therefore the Body is to share with the Soul in those Rewards, that it shall hereafter have in Heaven, for the Good that it has done here upon Earth, because it bore a part with it in all those Duties that were most Eminent and Conspicuous, and tended most to the Glory of God, and the Good of Men, it must necessarily follow, that upon this very Account also, we that call our selves Christians, and Profess to believe the Doctrine of our Saviour, and to follow his Example, in hopes of a Glorious Resurrection of our Bodies to Eternal Life, ought to take care that our *Light may so shine before Men, that they may*, &c. And thus I have shewn how fit and requisite this duty is,

2. I shall now consider this matter, with respect to the different Capacities and Abilities of Christians, for we may plainly see that God has distinguish'd some from others, by the larger Proportions of Gifts which he has bestow'd upon them, more then upon the rest, all Stars we know do not shine alike, for *One Star differeth from another Star in Glory*; Some are of greater Magnitude and Splendor then others, but yet since all are Stars, all do and must shine; so now it is amongst Men, and amongst Christians, some are in higher Stations then others, of larger Capacities both for Natural parts and acquir'd abilities,

1 Cor. 15. 41.

and

and have more and greater opportunities of doing Good then others; we will therefore distribute them into these 3 several Ranks and Sorts, and shew that all are oblig'd to do what they can in this matter, according to their several Abilities.

1. The first shall be of those that are of the largest Capacities, and Abilities for doing Good that are in Eminent Stations, and have great and glorious Opportunities for it, that have Good Parts and Excellent Faculties, Great Judgments and an happy Insight into Business, a ready and dextrous way of managing all things to the best Advantage, and that have Estates and Interests every way Answerable thereto; so that they may herein do even what they please, or will themselves; from these, now Great things are and will be Expected, nothing that's Common and Ordinary will be look'd upon, or minded in them; and indeed so our Lord has expresly told us, *Luk.* 12. 48. *Unto whomsoever much is given of him shall be much required*; Yea, there is in some of these a Largeness of Heart, Answerable to the Extent of their other Abilities, and therefore to advise these to that Privacy in doing Good, that may be commendable in others, is indeed to stifle all Good Motions and Inclinations in them, and to discourage and hinder that Good, which their Example might Excite in others; that modesty that would be Commendable in others, would be a defect, nay, a fault in them; They therefore are only to be Cautioned against all that Ostentation and Vain Glory that too many affect, and which will not only blur the Glory, but deprive us of all the Comfort of any Good that we may do, and yet at the same Time, are to be [illegible] Glorify God this way as much as they can; Yea, [illegible] ways to be made use of as a spur to stir us up thereto, [illegible] will be a great disgrace both to our selves and to our Profession if we do not thus improve what God has given us to be so imploy'd,

yea,

yea, our Account will be the more dreadful, when we shall be found at the last day, thus wanting in a thing of so great Moment and Importance.

2. The second sort shall be of those that are of meaner Capacities and Abilities, and seem by their Stations and Conditions, by their Tempers and Faculties, as it were appointed to a more private and retir'd Kind of Life. These indeed are not for Publick Stations, bold Undertakings and great Services; Nay, they may perhaps choose to retire on purpose, from a great crowd of Worldly business, to avoid the Temptations that do always attend such things, and that they may enjoy themselves, and make the greater Progress in Piety and Virtue, whilst they are alone, and have only their own Thoughts to converse with; and yet even these are not Exempted from this Duty, or depriv'd of Opportunities of being Exemplary unto others. And therefore,

1. They ought to make it appear as far as they can, that this does not proceed from Covetousness, Ill Nature, or a morose and sullen Temper, from an unprofitable sloth, or any ill design; but that they bear a Christian mind in all that they do, wishing well to others, that are at the greatest distance from them, yea, even to the whole Race of Mankind, Praying daily for them, to whom they are able to afford no other Relief. Nor are those Prayers and Affections to be wholly excluded from the Number of those Good works in which we are commanded to shine; for when once it is believed that we are thus serious and well imployed, whilst we are thus Private and Retired, we may be said to work, and to be good Examples to others, and tho Men don't see us, yet the Angels of God do, and are pleased with our Prayers, and Tears, and give Glory to God for that Pious and Heavenly Temper of Mind, which they thus discover to be in us.

2. These

2. These Persons whose Tempers and Inclinations, whose State and Condition do thus take them off from making any considerable Figure in the World, should be sure to abound in all Acts of Justice, Charity, and Goodness to those that are near them, and with whom they do actually Converse; and tho they are able to do no great matters, yet they are certainly bound to do all that their particular Circumstances enable them to do; and perhaps, they may do more good in their own Sphere, then if they were call'd forth to more Eminent Services which they are not altogether fit for. For many Persons by endeavouring to do more good than they are well able, hinder themselves from doing so much as otherwise they might; whereas those Persons that know their own strength, and keep within that compass, not only act more surely, but more powerfully, and appear at once both Prudent and Pious too.

3. The *third* sort is of those that are in the lowest Stations of all, and have the meanest Abilities and Capacities for the doing good. Now no Man can expect the same from these that might have been expected from others; but yet there are not a few Vertues which even they may be Adorn'd, and Shine with, if they are contented with their Stations, if they are truly thankful to God for what they have; if they do not Envy those that are above them; if they *labour truly to get their own livings*, and, as the Apostle says, *to eat their own Bread*; if they are Just and Honest in Dealings, true to their words, and abhor all wicked Practices, by which they may procure a Subsistance for themselves and Families, every body must and will commend and value them. The truth on't is, there is no sort or condition of Life whatsoever, that may not be made to appear with great Advantage, and be recommended to the esteem of

1 Thess. 3. 12

the

the World. Piety to God, Justice to Men, Truth and Honesty in all our Words and Actions, Temperance and Sobriety, Humility and Modesty, and several other things of this sort will always be had in Honour, nor is there any one whatsoever, of so mean and abject a Condition, or so high and exalted a Station, by whom these things may not be reduc'd into Practise; yea all things that pertain to this Life, whither they be Natural or Civil Actions, may be performed after a Religious manner, and there is no Man that makes profession of Christianity, that cares to do, or to be thought to do what he does, meerly out of necessity or custom, but from true Christian and Religious Principles. And by this, he lets his Light shine unto others, and is a Pattern to them of Good-works; and indeed, none but he that makes profession of Religion, can do any of these things either with such a mind, or to such an end, and therefore none but he can be truly said to shine therein. Nor can it be deny'd but that even in the works of Charity, which do commonly require a full Purse, as well as an open Hand, and a liberal Mind, and for that reason seem furthest removed from this present Case, may be recommended most illustriously to others, even from the meanest Stations. For as long as that Instance of *the poor Widow's Mite which she cast into the Treasury*, stands upon Record Mar. 12. 42. under so fair a Character from our Saviour's own Mouth, who does not see both the Capacity and the Duty of the meanest Person, that is in doing something of this kind, together with the Lustre that shines in all the Good that is so done by such Persons, tho the thing it self be otherwise, and in it own nature very mean, and inconsiderable, and not worth regarding.

And thus I have also shewed how this Precept is to be understood, with respect to the different Capacities of doing good that Men have.

3. I

3. I am now in the *third* place to consider, and shew how those Precepts that forbid all Publick Discoveries of our Good-works can be reconciled to this that requires us to make them as Conspicuous as we can. The Precepts that require all possible secresie in the doing of good, are altogether contained in this Sermon of our Saviour upon the Mount, and are Recorded by St. *Matthew*, in the beginning of his 6. *Chap. Take heed*, say our Saviour there, *that ye do not your Alms before Men, to be seen of them. When thou dost thine Alms, do not sound a Trumpet before thee as the Hypocrites do in the Synagogues, and in the Streets, that they may have Glory of Men: But when thou doest thine Alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doe. And when thou Prayest, be not as the Hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the Synagogues, and in the corners of the Streets, that they may be seen of Men: But thou, when thou Prayest, enter into thy Closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in Secret.* Now all these Precepts are easily reconciled with that which I have been hitherto discoursing upon, if we consider this matter, either, 1. in General, or 2. in Particular.

1. In General. None of the Good Works that we are here required to shine in, are to be done chiefly and only to be seen of Men: and this our Saviour most certainly means, by all those Precepts which we have now recited, for the *Pharisees* were Just and Charitable, and Devout, on purpose that they might be taken notice of, and be applauded by Men for what they did; this they expresly aimed at, and desir'd above all things.

2. But *secondly*, and more particularly, there are two sorts of Good Works, *Private*, and *Publick*.

1. *Private*, which are and can never be rightly perform'd but in Secret, as when (for inſtance) we Pray in our Families, we are not to make Proclamation of it in the Streets, neither when we Pray in our Cloſets are we to tell it to our Family: ſo when we give Alms to thoſe that are Poor, but are not known to be ſo, we are not then to diſcover it; and the reaſon is plain, becauſe the nature of thoſe things requires their privacy, and the true end of them is attain'd unto when they are done in Secret; but even in theſe Caſes there is ſome regard to be had to this very precept of the *Text* too; for tho, it is not fit that others ſhould know when, and what we do in this way, yet it is very fit, and perhaps neceſſary that they ſhould know that we have a Heart thereto, and that we actually do ſuch things ſometime. There's no Man that is a true Chriſtian, that would have any Body think him ſo Prophane, and Irreligious, as not to Pray to God Morning and Evening, or that he never gives Alms at all, altho he does not deſire that any body ſhould ſee and obſerve him, either in the one or in the other: It certainly makes for God's Glory when others believe and know that we do theſe things, and it would be a great Diſparagement to our Profeſſion, as well as to our ſelves, if it ſhould be thought that we do none of theſe things at all, or that we do them ſo unwillingly that we would never do them, if we could avoid it.

2. There are Good Works that are Public, as well as Private, that reſpect the City, the Country, or the Kingdom and Nation to which we do belong; ſuch as the Building of Churches for the Worſhip of God, the Founding and Endowing of Schools and Colleges, for the furtherance of Piety, good Learning, and Manners; of Hoſpitals and Alms-houſes for the relief of the Poor and Needy; of Bedlams and Bridewels for Lunaticks and Vagrants; now to forbid theſe to be Publick and

and Conſpicuous, is to forbid them to be done at all. Let theſe kind of Benefactions be deferred till they can be ſo privately done, as that none can know either the Founder, or the work, and the moſt Covetous Wretch that is, may be accounted as Liberal as the moſt Munificent, and not have one Farthing the leſs in his Pocket. Beſides, it will be next to impoſſible, nay, it would be Ridiculous to go about to perſwade ſo many Thouſand Perſons, that muſt of neceſſity ſee theſe things whilſt they are Building, to ſhut their Eyes, and not to take Notice of ſuch great things as theſe are, upon which ſuch vaſt Treaſures are expended; for if they would never ſo fain, they cannot chooſe but ſee and be pleas'd with them; and indeed, it's very fit they ſhould ſee and obſerve them, that ſo thoſe that have Abilities for ſuch things, may perceive that there are ſome Generous and Pious Souls, that are worthy of imitation here, and of Immortal Glory hereafter; certainly, as long as our Univerſities ſtand, yea, as long as this Great City remains, which is ſo deſervedly famous, for its Multitude of well Deſign'd, well Govern'd, and I hope and believe faithfully mannag'd Charities, the Memory of ſuch Benefactors, and ſuch Truſtees, will be always bleſſed; for next to the Founding and Endowing, the juſt and upright management of ſuch Charities, muſt neceſſarily be reckon'd amongſt the chiefeſt of thoſe Good Works, in which we are requir'd to ſhine. Let none of our adverſaries then Reproach us any more, as if the Proteſtant Faith had excluded all Obligations to Good Works, ſince upon a juſt Computation, it has been long ſince found, that the Publick Benefactions ſince the Reformation have far exceeded, and more then doubl'd, all that Popery could Boaſt of in twice that ſpace before, and that this great City did herein equal the whole Kingdom beſides. And if ſo, what a Glorious height will theſe riſe to, when

all that has been done ſince that Time ſhall be added thereto; which when all things are conſider'd, will perhaps be found to be more and greater then any ſuch like Number of Years, can any where produce. And as for thoſe Duties that relate to the Publick Exerciſes of Religion, they are by no means to be omitted, nay, thoſe Perſons will do very ill, and Act contrary to the Deſign of all ſuch Publick Services, if they do not take care to do them openly. In Private Faſts, indeed we are to take Care, that we may not be taken Notice of by Men, but in Publick Faſts, all outward Acts that may decently expreſs the deepeſt Humiliation of our minds, are to be kept up, and perhap the great Auſterities that were uſed to ſo good purpoſe in the Primitive Church, have been laid aſide very much to the Prejudice of thoſe neceſſary Duties of Chriſtian Mortification and Repentance.

In all other Duties, which are Publick as well as Holy, the ſeveral Poſtures which the Prudence and Authority of the Church requires, and which common Decency and Cuſtom have made fit, ſuch as the uncovering of our Heads, and Kneeling in the Worſhip of God, are not to be neglected, leſt we ſhould be thought to Rob God himſelf, of any part of that Honour that's due to him; Nay, certainly ſuch Worſhippers deſerve rather to be accounted undecent before Men, then truly Pious and Devout towards God.

And thus I have alſo ſhewn, how all thoſe Precepts that forbid all Publick Appearances in the doing of Good, are to be underſtood, and how they may be Reconcil'd to this of the Text, in which we are commanded to *Let our Light ſo to ſhine before men, that*, &c. And this brings me to the 4th and laſt thing which I propounded, which is the Application.

4. I ſhall therefore endeavour to apply it both according to the Nature of the thing its ſelf, and to the preſent occaſion.

1. What great cauſe have we to bleſs God, that the works which we are requir'd to ſhine in before men, are all of them ſuch as are in themſelves truly Good, and every way Commendable. We know that many of the *Jewiſh Laws* were not ſo, but were only Good becauſe commanded, and were even in that Caſe only ſo for a time, till by the coming of the *Meſſias*, the whole State of their Affairs was to be chang'd. We find alſo, and that even amongſt their moſt eminent Prophets, many things requir'd and done, that were hardly reconcilable to the common Rules of Decency, Modeſty and Morality; for *Iſaias* was commanded *to walk Naked and Barefoot*, (20. 2.) *Ezeck.* was enjoyn'd *to Eat Bread baked with Mans dung*, (4. 12.) *Hoſea* was commanded to *take a Wife of Whoredom*, and after that another, *That was beloved of her Friends, yet an Adultereſs.* All which, with many more of this kind which might be mention'd (which whether they were really done, or only Repreſented in a Viſion, or Similitude) ſeem indeed not very decent nor ſuitable to their Stations and Conditions; but now thoſe things that are requir'd of us, are and always will be in their own Natures Good, and highly commendable, being agreeable to the common ſenſe of all mankind in General, and to the Deſires and Tempers of all Good men in particular; they are ſuch as improve and adorn the mind, and enoble the Soul, and make a man appear to the World with all the Advantages immaginable. I confeſs, indeed that there are ſome things requir'd under the Goſpel, that ſeem not to fall ſo immediately under this Character, being rather above our common Notions and Apprehenſions of things; ſuch are all thoſe Articles of the Chriſtian

Ch. 1. v. Ch. 3.

ſtian Faith, that relate to the Death and Sufferings of our Bleſſed Saviour; But to thoſe that do believe that *Chriſt died for our Sins*, even theſe alſo appear with great Luſtre and Advantage, and they may be ſaid to ſhine no leſs in them, becauſe of their Agreeableneſs to the common Principles of our minds, now they are reveal'd, then in other things that are more readily apprehended by us. I know alſo, that there are ſome Precepts that depend purely upon Eccleſiaſtical and Civil Authority and Prudence, which when they are enjoyn'd, are to be obſerv'd and obey'd, but theſe now are not neceſſary in their own Nature, nor are they any longer to be obſerv'd then that Authority, which 1ſt enjoyn'd them ſhall think fit; But by theſe the Worſhip of God is decently perform'd, which otherwiſe would be very uncertain and irregular, and ſure it muſt always be a commendable and a neceſſary thing, to have all things done *decently and in order*; ſo that even in theſe things we may be Examples of Good, as well as in the reſt; and ſo, as we have cauſe to bleſs God, that he has commanded us to ſhine in no other works but what are truly Good and Commendable in themſelves, ſo we are not a little oblig'd to Praiſe and to be Thankful to him, for enjoyning us to be *Subject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey thoſe that are ſet over us*, both in Church and State, ſince otherwiſe there would have been no place, or ſphere for us to ſhine in, whilſt we are doing of Good.

1 Cor. 14. 40

Tit. 3. 1. Heb. 13. 17

2. This reproves thoſe that are very Zealous in doing of ſome things, as Good Works, that really and truly are not ſo in themſelves; and here I would not be thought to reflect with any manner of ſeverity upon thoſe whoſe miſtaken Zeal carries them out to ſome things that will by no means bear that ſtreſs which they lay upon them, ſuch as were the *Therapeut* of old, whom *Euſebius* mentions, who certainly were

were more Rigid than they needed to have been, for they would never taſt any manner of Food till after Sun-ſet, being as it were aſham'd to be ſeen to take any care of their Bodies, as if it were an infamous thing in its ſelf ſo to do, and like a deed of Darkneſs fit only for the Night: But yet I cannot forbear expreſſing a juſt Indignation againſt thoſe who place Religion in the moſt Barbarous and Inhumane Cruelties, which they continualy exerciſe upon themſelves for many Years together, Macerating their Bodies with all manner of rigorous Diſcipline; becauſe in their ſo doing they make that *Yoke* hard *which is eaſie*, and *that Burthen* heavy *which is Light*. But what ſhall we think or ſay to that ridiculous pair of Spiritual Brethren, *Ignatius*, and *Xaverius*, the two grand *Saints* of the *Jeſuitical College*, who to make themſelves the more Famous for overcoming the World, became truly and deſervedly Infamous, for that odious method they took in doing of it, by often drinking of that Water, in which the Ulcerated Sores of many Diſeaſed Perſons had been waſhed. Such practiſes as theſe muſt needs make all Perſons to nauſeat ſuch kind of Devotions, and even hate the Religion that ſhall oblige others thereto. The Kingdom of God conſiſts not *in Meat and Drink*, much leſs in ſuch naſty fare, *but in Righteouſneſs, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt*. To theſe I may alſo joyn thoſe who are always talking of Religion, but are ſeldom found in the Practice of it, and thoſe alſo that are very hot and fierce in contending for ſome particular Opinions which they have imbib'd, but are very cold in the practice of what is more their Duty, becauſe truly and undoubtedly good, eſteeming it enough to ſhew their Wit and Pains, their

Mat. 11. 30.

Rom. 14. 17

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Learning and Skill in the Managing of Arguments and Controverſies; which admit they do, and that their Opinions are true in themſelves, they are not much to be commended, (for what are private and particular Opinions to the grand Duties of the Chriſtian Life and Temper?) But if they are falſe, how greatly are they to blame? For no body can think the greateſt skill in Controverſie equal to plain and honeſt Truth. But further yet, what if they ſhould be ſo blameleſs in their Lives and Manners, as to ſeem to have *Taſted of the Heavenly Gift, and of the Powers of the World to come*, good Men can find but little comfort in Converſing with them, at leaſtwiſe it muſt abate very much of that Satisfaction, which they otherwiſe might have taken therein, when they ſhall ſee them in the mean time endeavouring to undermine and overturn the very Foundations of the *Chriſtian Faith*, in which if they ſhould be ſo unhappy as to become ſucceſful, I very much queſtion whether all the good they can do beſides, will afford a Luſtre great enough to ſhine thro' the Fogs and Miſts of ſuch groſs and impious Errors. If the God-head of our Saviour be denied, and his ſatisfaction for our Sins wholly taken away, or which tends thereto; If the *Moſaick* Hiſtory, concerning the Fall of Man be at beſt but an Allegory, or a well contrived Story, adapted to the *Jewiſh* Capacity, as uncapable of underſtanding more plain and ſubſtantial Truth: Certainly the very Goſpel it ſelf, if I may ſo ſpeak, is to be pitied upon the ſcore of theſe Pe[illegible]. For if the *Children of Light* ſhine in this manner, their good works muſt give a luſtre to their Errors and Blaſphemies at the

Heb. 6. 4.

[illegible];

ſame time that they ſhew the Perſons that do them to be otherwiſe Virtuous and Good Men; this indeed is to *go down to the Philiſtines to ſharpen our Coulter*; and I leave you to Judge, whether it be not a Diſgrace to this our *Iſrael*, that we have no Work-men of our own to do it for us. 1 Sam. 13. 20.

3. This may ſerve to Excite and Quicken us all, who profeſs our ſelves to be Followers of the bleſſed Jeſus, and pretend to be Enlightned by him, to do the utmoſt we can in this matter, which is ſo plain and neceſſary, thoſe of us, eſpecially to whom God hath given large Capacities, greater Abilities, and Opportunities for it than others have, either by our Stations or Wealth, or any other means by which we are enabled to do good: Theſe certainly are Talents entruſted with us to this, and to no other purpoſe; for we are none of us made greater and richer than others for our own ſakes, that ſo the reſt of the World may gaze upon us and applaud our good Fortune and Condition, for this may be done to Beaſts and Fowls; but that we may do the more good to Mankind, for whoſe ſake alone we are thus entruſted, both with Power and Wealth; and therefore, if we are not Good as well as Great, Charitable as well as Rich, we had better never have been either, for we ſhall therein become but ſo much the more Ridiculous and Contemptible in this World, and ſo much the more miſerable in another. It's Goodneſs only that is the true Greatneſs, that gives a luſtre to any Station that we are in, and where this is wanting, even the very Attendants of all our outward State and Grandeur, will and may well

deſpiſe us; what we have, and what we are, is always known and valued by what we do.

The memory of Rich and Great men is, I confeſs like to be more laſting then others, but we can never ſay, it will be therefore more Honourable and Bleſſed, except their Virtues and their Good deeds make it ſo, for unleſs they are Remembred for ſomething that's truly Good in its ſelf, it would be better for them to be utterly forgotten; the Ridiculous Stories of their baſe Actions, and of the many Follies which they committed, which diſcover the Narrowneſs of their Souls, and their ſordid minds, are longer told, and with greater Acceptance to their moſt laſting Infamy and Diſgrace; whereas had they but been Charitable and Good, they would always have been ſpoken of with Honour and Reſpect. And if any Malicious, or Ill Natur'd Perſon ſhall at any Time reflect upon any of their paſt Failings and Miſcarriages, the Remembrance of their Good deeds will not only cover over a Multitude of ſuch Faults, but will ſo Imbalm their Names and Memories, that they ſhall always caſt forth a ſweet Perfume, and be mention'd with Honour and Delight; yea, every body will be ready not only to excuſe what they did once amiſs, by the laſting Good which they have ſince done, but will take occaſion even therefrom to commend their Good deeds the more, and thereby both ſtop the mouths of ſuch unworthy Calumniators, and open the [illegible] that are of a more Ingenuous and Grateful Temper, to give Glory to God for the Happy change he has wrought in their Hearts, and

for the great Good that he has done by their Hands. Nor can any pretend that they want either for opportunities, or occasions, or encouragements that see this Goodly sight that's here before us, or that hear that true Report which I am to Read, of what this Great and Noble City has done this year.

A TRUE REPORT, &c.

These now are all of them such Great and Good Works, that it's hardly possible to find any, in which we can shine with a greater lustre, more to Gods Glory and the good of Mankind, for they include almost every thing that can be call'd by that Name, and set this Great *City* upon such a *Hill* as shall make it much more Glorious, and I hope more safe and happy, then that City which has long indeed boasted of her situation upon 7 Hills, but is far from being able even from them all to shine like this. O let not this Glory then be Ecclips'd, let no cloud hinder it from shining in its full Lustre. Nay, let not the Iniquity of the Times interpose to the abating any thing of it, and I rather speak it, because when once *Charity fails*, it is to be fear'd that every thing else that we can depend upon will fail us too; and let me tell you, there has been this unhappy Omen of it, that for these 2 years last past, as well as for this present Year, there has been such a stop put to that particular Kind of Charity, which of all others seems to me to be the most comprehensive and lasting and which posterity is most obliged by, I mean that of the Good Education and Happy Placing out of *Orphans*, that there have been none such taken in at *Christs* Hospital

pital in all that time. This I hope proceeds partly from the great difficulties which we have at present such just cause to complain of, which the whole Kingdom labours under too, and partly, but more especially from the multitude of those other sad and deplorable Objects that call more loudly for relief, and not from any want of Charity in those whose Abilities enable them to send in those supplies that are necessary for so great and so good a work: And therefore having thus Acquainted you with it, I shall content my self with what I have done, without offering in the least to press you to consider it, because I will not so much as suppose that you need any more to Excite you to do Good, then only to shew you the fairest opportunities of doing it to the best Advantage, to the Glory of God and the publick good, which you see is the main thing the Text Aims at, in requiring you thus to shine. *Therefore let your Light so shine*, &c.

FINIS.